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EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH : Deputy Director for Management and Services
SUBJECT : Human Interaction and Assessment Laboratory

1. Subject training course has recently come to the attention of this office [REDACTED]

25X1A

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A detailed description of course participation by a member of the Office of Security is attached. It is the view of the Office of Medical Services that the course should be discontinued as a high risk effort with a doubtful purpose.

2. The element of risk is in the stress resulting from the intensity of the group experience. There is always some stress in group situations, and casualties may occur in simple training situations or in experiences like the Managerial Grid. The special stress in this case, however, relates to the special intensity of the situation. Under these dimensions, this course is high risk.

3. While the stated purpose of the exercise is "to enhance the case officer's operational skills," the fact of the matter is that the course is used as a therapeutic device. It is not uncommon that personnel are selected for the course who have or believe they have some difficulty in ordinary everyday relationships. Under the stresses of this experience, it can be expected that existing problems of interpersonal relationship will be aggravated for some with a deleterious effect. There is simply no magical formula whereby in a week's time the problems of a lifetime can be transformed. The chances are greater for increased difficulty and breakdown.

4. It should be noted that the course instructor is apparently concerned enough about hazards that his contract was written at his request to relieve him of any personal responsibility for untoward reactions in individuals who participate in the course. It is difficult to think of any other situation where an official is so relieved of responsibility. If the hazard is that high for the instructor, it is equally high for the sponsor, this agency.

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5. This form of group experience, known as "encounter group," has been described in various ways. For some it is the ultimate in psychotherapy; others -- perhaps less fortunate -- describe it otherwise. It is novel and exciting, but it is also dangerous. Beyond that, there is little reason to think that it has much to contribute to operations.

6. We would all like to find better ways to accomplish operational objectives. And the effort to seek improvement through changing human interaction patterns is to be applauded. I do not think, however, that this course is the way to do it. We should discontinue the practice before more people get hurt.

JOHN R. TIETJEN, M. D.

Director of Medical Services

Attachment

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Human Interaction and Assessment Laboratory

FROM:

Director of Medical Services
1D-4061 Headquarters

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

7711

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. Deputy Director for
Mgmt and Services

2.

3. Executive Secretary
7D-6019 Hqs.

4.

5. Director of Central
Intelligence

6.

7.

8.

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15.

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2	DD/MS	14 June	<i>[Signature]</i>		
3	FILE				
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1	Deputy Director for Mgmt and Services		
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Director of Medical Services 1D-4061 Hqs. (X-7711)			

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Director of Medical Services					
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